

December 17, 2002

HOLIDAY TRAVEL ACCIDENT PREDICTIONS RELEASED

The Department of Motor Vehicle Safety and the Georgia State Patrol today jointly released Georgia accident predictions for the Christmas and New Year's holiday travel periods.

For Christmas Holiday travel, it is predicted that 814 motor vehicle accidents statewide will occur resulting in 301 injuries and 10 fatalities. This counting period covers 30 hours beginning at 6:00pm Tuesday, December 24, 2002 and ending at midnight, Wednesday, December 25, 2002.

The 2002 New Year's Holiday prediction spans 30 hours beginning at 6:00 pm, Tuesday, December 31, 2002 and ending at midnight, Wednesday, January 1, 2003. These Agencies estimate that there will be 758 motor vehicle accidents resulting in 8 fatalities and 297 injuries during this time.

DMVS Commissioner Tim Burgess today cautioned motorists to drive safety during their holiday travel. "These last few weeks of the year give us an opportunity to spend special time with family and friends. Holidays are for celebration, and by buckling up, avoiding drinking and driving and sharing the road patiently, we can dramatically reduce the chance of being killed or injured," he said.

Colonel George Ellis, Georgia State Patrol Commander, said state troopers will team with local law enforcement agencies throughout the holidays for a concentrated effort on impaired drivers. "State troopers will have zero tolerance for drivers under the influence of alcohol or drugs," Colonel Ellis said. "I cannot emphasize enough the importance of using a designated driver if you will be drinking. No one should be forced to deal with the loss of a loved one at the hands of an impaired driver," he said.

Last Christmas Season there were 16 fatalities, 875 injuries and 3,653 accidents reported. For New Year's, 2,745 accidents were reported with 14 fatalities and 663 injuries.

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